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THE GOOD FIGHT.

A SERMON

PREACHED IN THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, GOULD ST., TORONTO.

ON AUGUST 22ND, 1869.

ON OCCASION OF THE DEATH OF THE

REV. ROBERT BURNS, D.D.

Professor of Church History in Knox College.

BY

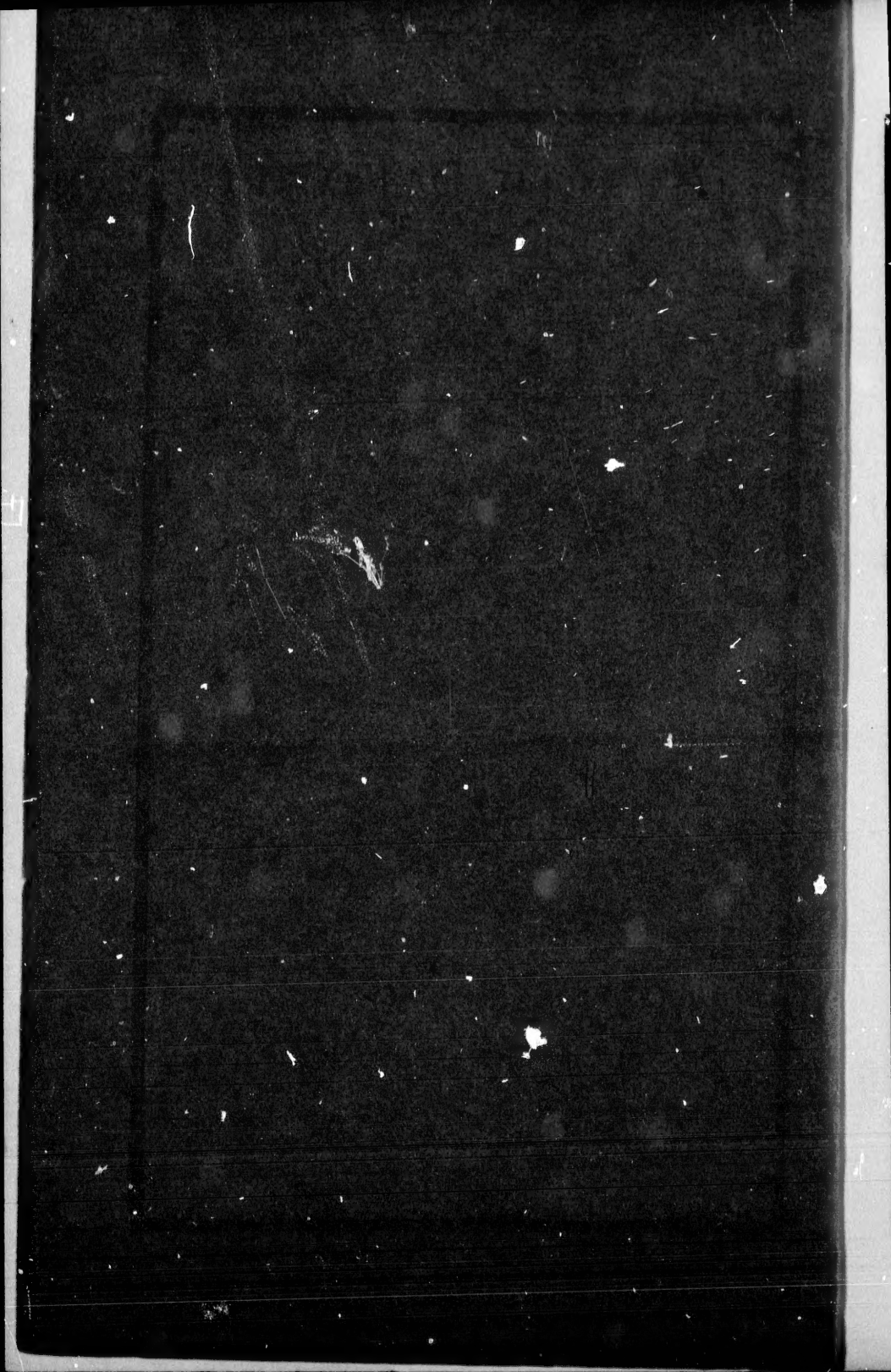
REV. JOHN M. KING, M.A.

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THE GOOD FIGHT.

II. TIMOTHY, IV.—7.

"I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith."

THE remarkable words contained in the sixth, seventh and eighth verses, were written by the Apostle towards the close of a long and honored course of Christian service, and in the near prospect of his removal from earth. In his case, as the words themselves not doubtfully indicate, the removal was to be accomplished by a violent death. The anticipation does not daunt him. Let death come how soon, and in what form it might, it could not undo the work which he had wrought, and just as little deprive him of the reward which he had earned. Rather, it should put the seal of completeness and divine acceptance on the one, and introduce him to the speedier attainment of the other. Accordingly he does not view it with feelings of discomposure; the very reverse. His mood is not merely resigned, but exultant even. It is a species of triumphal ode in which his spirit finds expression, and not a sorrowful plaint, as he approaches the altar on which his blood is to be shed. "I am now ready to be offered," he exclaims, "and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is

laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day, and not to me only, but unto all them, also, that love his appearing."

To-day, when we are reminded by all this dark and solemn drapery around us, of the death of the aged and honored servant of Christ, whom it has pleased God to remove since we last met, we shall find in these words of the Apostle, spoken in anticipation of his own departure from life, a theme of discourse appropriate to the occasion, and in unison with the feelings which it has awakened in all our hearts. That the discourse may not exceed moderate limits, while, at the same time, space is found in it for a brief and imperfect estimate of the character and services of the departed, I shall confine my remarks to the words of the seventh verse, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith."

These words are so simple, and the figures employed so familiar to those conversant with the language of Scripture, that little requires to be said in the way of explanation. One remark only of an explanatory kind is offered. The verse, it will be observed, consists of three parallel clauses, each in form at least complete in itself. And the point to which I would call attention is this,—that the reference in all of these clauses is to one and the same fact in the Apostle's experience. It is the same truth, literally expressed in the last clause, which is described under the figure of a fight or contest in the first, and under that of a race in the second. To keep the faith, to retain faith in Christ till life's close, and the steadfast loyalty to Christ's truth and

Christ's will, which is simply faith in another form; that is just to fight the good fight, to finish the course. Let it be understood, then, that the Apostle speaks in this verse, and we, to-day, after him, of but one subject; the Christian life on earth,—his own life as a servant of the Lord Jesus.

In further considering his words, I ask you to notice: *First*, the testimony which they bear to the character of this life as one of conflict and toil, one needing daily exertion and endurance. You have not failed to observe the terms employed by the Apostle to designate the Christian life in this and other passages. He calls it a *fight*, that is, a contest, a struggle for the mastery in presence of and against antagonists strong enough to dispute our attainment thereof, capable of coming between us and the prize, if we are either indolent or unskilful; a *course*, or race, in which not all who enter the lists come in as winners at the goal, requiring for its successful running both discipline and perseverance, ardor of spirit and straining of nerve. The figures are often employed by the Apostle. As representations of the believer's life on earth, they are among the most common in Scripture. Their employment for such a purpose would be altogether inappropriate and misleading, were that life in any case one of easy, unimpeded progress. To satisfy ourselves that it is never this, that this certainly is not its normal character, it is only necessary to pass from figure to fact, and to enquire what it is to lead a Christian life—the life of a Christian man or of a Christian minister. It is, in the language of our text, to keep the faith; to keep it, not as a body of truth, a complete and consistent scheme of

doctrine—for that is not the meaning of the word here—but as a vital and vivifying principle. The two, indeed, are closely connected; the preservation of the doctrine in its integrity, with the maintenance of the faith in its habitual and healthful exercise. But it is the latter that is mainly referred to here. To lead the Christian life, then, is to keep in exercise faith in Christ, and in the wide realm of truth, and obligation, and motive, and aim, and hope, and joy, of which He is the centre; to preserve it as ours, amid not a little in the forces at work within and around us, fitted to rob us of its possession, or reduce it to an empty and profitless form; to have our life sustained by it, living “by the faith of the Son of God who loved” us, and “gave himself for” us; to give it expression in all suitable forms of speech and action, and in all circles. Otherwise stated, it is to preserve love to Christ’s person in our affections, loyalty to Christ’s truth in our opinions, allegiance to Christ’s will in our whole conduct; bringing not only every act and word, but “every thought to the obedience of Christ;” “keeping under the body and bringing it into subjection,” that its “members” may be “instruments of righteousness unto God;” and to do this, or aim at doing it, while yet compassed with an evil world, and carrying about “the body of this death.” Words are not needed to show—not needed at least by those of you who are endeavouring to live it—that the life in which such an aim is steadily kept in view, is, and must be, one of conflict and toil, one, not compatible in its successful pursuit with indolence or self-indulgence, rather needing strenuous exertion and self-denial—a race, a fight.

And it partakes still more largely and clearly of this character, when it is led, as the Apostle led it, and as our departed and venerated father led it, with the obligation recognized, not only to hold the truth, but to preach it ; not only to care for his own soul, but to have in solemn charge the souls of others ; not only to do homage to the truth and the Saviour in the sanctuary of his own heart, or amongst Christ's friends, but to witness for a full gospel and a sovereign Redeemer in the midst of his enemies, and in the endurance of reproach and loss ; to make surrender of position and income, and do violence to cherished feelings that the rights of the Redeemer's crown, and the liberties of His people might be preserved inviolate. In any case, however,—in the case of the private Christian, as in that of the preacher—amid the subtle and ensnaring hindrances of the days in which we live, as amid the fiercer and more pronounced antagonists of earlier times—the Christian life is one of conflict and toil. Whatever may be its helps and securities from above, and they are many and strong ; whatever its consolations within, and they are pure and lofty ; whatever its reward in the end, and that is unspeakably and inconceivably precious, the life itself is one of arduous, persistent and, as might sometimes seem, vain or doubtfully efficacious effort.

With the Christian life in this aspect of it, the revered servant of God, whose unexpected removal occupies the thoughts of all of us to-day, has for ever done. Into that land, which we are permitted to believe he has entered, the strain and sweat and uncertainty of the earthly conflict are not carried. They fight not

yonder, for there is no foe. They race no longer, for the goal is reached. They keep not any more the faith as a sacred, but ever imperilled treasure, for thither "no thief enters;" "They shall not hurt nor destroy in all" God's "holy mountain." Oh! it is surely a very blessed truth that there is for us all a fixed limit in the divine foreknowledge beyond which the strain and effort and anxious uncertainty which enter so largely into the present experience of all earnest hearts, shall not be able to prolong themselves; a determinate point in our history, and one which we are every hour nearing, when these shall altogether cease, and cease for ever; a boundary beyond which faith shall no longer be an effort, for it shall have been perfected in sight, nor obedience aught but a joy, the homage which perfect love shall pay to a Saviour at once present and visible.

I ask you to notice, *second*, the attribute of honor with which the words of the Apostle invest the Christian life. It is, if a fight, a good fight; a noble and lofty contest, intrinsically so, and apart altogether from the position and circumstances of those who lead it; nay, *the* good fight—for so the words read in the original—the one contest which ennobles all who with true and honest hearts engage in it, and the issues of which shall make them eternally blessed. To keep the faith; to believe not in pleasure, money, worldly success of any kind, but in Christ; to regard fealty to Him, and fellowship with Him, as the one path to blessedness; to seek the enthronement of Christ in intellect, conscience, will, emotion; "whatsoever we do in word or deed, to do all in the name of the Lord Jesus," "heartily as to the Lord, and not unto men;" to aim at this, if not to attain

to it; to struggle on towards its attainment, even though sometimes amid humiliating weakness and failure; this, the Apostle's words assure us, is the one good fight, the one worthy race, the one ambition, which corresponds to the greatness of man's powers, and to the still more wonderful greatness of the ransom which has been paid for him. There is no other. We need not hesitate to claim this exclusive glory for the Christian life. Only let us take care, in doing so, to conceive of this life in no narrow spirit, to avoid identifying it with any particular profession or forms of activity. Rightly viewed, it can penetrate and hallow the activities of the politician or the mechanic as really, if not as readily, as those of the evangelist or the apostle. The man who is striving to purify the administration of justice, or to soften it with mercy; the man who is laboring to remove the obliquities of trade, to write, Holiness to the Lord, on buying and selling; or the servant who is trying to maintain a sense of the Saviour's presence amid the humble offices of domestic life, is fighting the good fight as truly as, and it may sometimes be more bravely than, the man who is engaged in preaching the everlasting Gospel. The main thing is not the form of the activity, nor the field in which it is exercised, but its predominating spirit and aim; its connection with the redemptive work of the Saviour, or its want of connection; its subservience to the advancement and triumph of that work, or its want of subservience. All this, I dare say, is well known; is not denied in Christian circles at least, but it cannot be too often or too earnestly urged. We must not be afraid to say, we must not tire saying, that all plan-

ning and working, all activity of brain and muscle, which does not connect itself in its spirit and purpose with Him who has been made Lord over all; all fighting which is not directed against evil within and around us, which does not aim at the subjugation of pride, and lust, and self-will, and oppression, and wrong, and at the establishment of faith, and righteousness, and charity; all racing which does not carry the runner up towards the one sinless and perfect model of human excellence; all keeping which fails to guard faith and a good conscience as the soul's chief treasure, is vain, is among the "wood and hay and stubble" which the fire of the coming trial shall consume, not to be counfounded with the imperishable gold. The struggle in behalf of Christ and with Christ, under his benign leadership and inspiration; the aspirations of the soul after truth and purity and goodness; the pressing "toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ;" the keeping the life of the soul pure and full in the keeping its connection close and continuous with Him who is the Life as He is the Light of men; this, and this only, is the *good* fight, the ambition altogether answering to the image of God in which we were made, and the blood of Christ by which we were redeemed. And at the end, if not before, it is seen to be so. What a disenchanting wand is not that which death carries? What illusions, cherished as life itself, and for almost as long a term, are not dispelled by its approach? Who dreams of putting the believing and the unbelieving life, the life of faith and the life of sense, on a level then? With what different feelings do we not regard, when it is just passing away, or quite past, the life that has been

merely worldly, however successful and, even in a way, virtuous, and one—like that of the revered father who has just gone from our midst—not perfect, indeed, but devoted in the main to Christian ends, and filled with holy and beneficent activities. Compared with such a life, how poor and mean the mere scramble for pleasure, or power, or wealth, or worldly favour! how far beneath it, even devotion to the interests of science, or the glories of art, unless when that devotion is hallowed by faith in the Saviour, and its results made subservient to His glory!

I ask you to notice, *once more*, the evidence which the Apostle's words supply of the satisfaction with which the close of such a life is contemplated by him who has led it, "For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness," &c. There is no mistaking the spirit in which these words are uttered, the tone of satisfaction, even triumph, which runs through them. We almost forget that it is of death, his own death, that the Apostle speaks; so completely absent from his language is all that we usually associate with that change. Here is no trace of pain, or sorrow, or sinking nature. The picture is bright with the mild glories of dawning immortality. Looking at it, we instinctively exclaim, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" The Apostle's words are words of inward satisfaction, of assured confidence, indeed, of exultant triumph. There was a time when, "girding on his harness," or later still, amid the thick of the fight, he could

not thus boast; when he could only say, "I keep under my body and bring it into subjection, lest that by any means when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway;" but that time is past, the goal is reached or fully in view now, and he contemplates with liveliest satisfaction the course over which he has been brought, the work which he has been enabled to accomplish, as well as the reward on which he is about to enter. It is the satisfaction springing from the former with which alone we have to deal to-day; the happiness which the soul experiences in feeling that its powers have not been altogether misdirected, that the life has been led in a spirit not altogether unworthy of Him who has bestowed and sustained it, that it has pleased the Almighty to make its activities tributary to some extent to the advancement of His Kingdom of righteousness and peace and joy. That satisfaction was the Apostle's as he stood on the very verge of the earthly life, as in a greater or less degree it is that of all who share his faith and devotion. "I have fought," he says, "the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith."

What must be the emotions with which those who have devoted life to purely selfish and worldly ends regard its close? Oh, I think a feeling of intense misery must often seize the mind of such when the end at length draws near, and as they look back on activities and aims purely earthly, on a life disconnected from its beginning to its close with God and Christ and Christian aims. They can hardly escape the painful conviction, that they have been guilty of utter yet irretrievable folly, in giving to worldly or sinful ends the energies

which were bestowed for higher purposes ; that the true end of life has been missed, and that there is not another life in which to rectify the mistake.

In striking and happy contrast therewith is the feeling which meets us here, and with which the Apostle and men of his spirit contemplate the close of the earthly life. That feeling, indeed, must often, if not always, be a mixed one. There will be room for humiliation and regret, as well as for satisfaction and thanksgiving. But the latter predominate, as in the case before us. Through the blessing of God, the life has been redeemed "from the vain conversation received by tradition from their 'fathers.'" Christ has been served in it, often imperfectly and with much of human weakness and failure, but really served. It has not been wholly thrown away. The fight has not been as of "one that beateth the air," nor the race as of one that has mistaken alike the course and the goal. The close of life finds him still clad in the whole armour of God, that armour indented by many a blow, but not laid aside, "a good soldier of Jesus Christ," even when "such an one as Paul the aged." The evening hour of a long and toilsome day finds him wearied in the service, but not wearied of it ; waiting for the Master's appearing, but working as he waits ; a believer still in Him whom he once reviled, steadfast in the faith ; and therefore glad, nay, triumphant, thankful for the past and exultant in the future.

This satisfaction it was not permitted him to feel in the last hours of life, with whose death our thoughts are this day occupied. These hours were, so far as man could judge, hours of comparative unconsciousness.

From the time that a fatal issue to the illness, so mild in its first stages, became a probability, the mind ceased to perform its wonted functions. But while disease, attacking first or very early the organ of thought, dimmed or altogether took away the sweet consciousness of victory in his case, it could not affect the fact of it. He knew not the triumphant end that was being reached. Others knew and rejoiced therein. He could not say it himself, but others, privileged to wait around his death bed, said it with thankfulness to God. 'He has fought the good fight, he has accomplished his course, he has kept the faith, henceforth there is laid up for him the crown of righteousness which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give him in that day.' The nearest approach on his part to the strain of triumph in which the Apostle took farewell of life, was the repetition, again and again, in the last discourse which he preached, of the words, "Now thanks be unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ." There was no anticipation by him or us then, of the end as near. The still full and hearty, though somewhat feebler tones, in which these and other favorite passages were quoted, seemed to forbid such an anticipation, to prophecy a ministration of the word that might still last for years. But if it had been otherwise, if the anticipation of approaching death had been present, there is no reason to believe that the triumphant exclamation of the Apostle would have been less confidently uttered. In point of fact, at any rate, that was the key-note of the last discourse which this laborious and honored servant of God was to speak. It was arranged by that Master whom he served, that a ministry extending over almost

sixty years, and which had not been without its share of discouragement and trial, should close in the appropriate strain: "Now thanks be unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ."

It will be expected that, in bringing this discourse to a close, I should speak somewhat more in detail of the character and services of our revered and departed father. You have already been made acquainted through the public press with the leading events in his history, and the important services rendered by him to the cause of literature and to various enterprises of a social and benevolent kind. It is not my intention to go back on those historical facts, which would find a more appropriate place in a biography of the deceased than in a sermon designed to improve the occasion of his death. I think it better, in what remains, simply to call attention to one or two prominent and distinguishing excellencies in his character, as that has been seen by us who have known him chiefly in his later years; and in dwelling on these, our aim would be at once to do honor to his now sacred memory, to quicken in our own hearts the love of the gracious qualities by which he was marked, and, above all, to honor the grace of the Saviour, to which, what was excellent in these qualities, and what of good resulted from them, were due.

The first feature which attracts attention, in contemplating the character of the departed, is the extraordinary activity which characterized him, his unceasing application to work, the wonderful enthusiasm and energy which he carried, even in age, into every undertaking. Sabbath and week day; morning, noon and night, till failing sight made it imprudent or impos-

sible for him to read much in the evening hours ; Scotland and Canada ; our city, where his form was so well known, and the remote settlements of the Province, in many of which it was as readily recognized ; the College and his own residence ; in short, all times and places found that busy mind employed, working or planning work, preaching, teaching, glancing through books with dim eye but with quick and sure discernment of their spirit and worth, writing notices of brethren who had preceded him to the grave, or reviews of works of literature, advising with students as to their difficulties, arranging the Library or taking means for its enlargement ; never inactive unless when compelled to cease exertion through sheer exhaustion ; and never satisfied with any past achievement, but forthwith embarking on new enterprises, laying new plans of work for himself—occasionally too for others—which looked far ahead. Activity was his delight ; idleness in others—he did not know it in himself—his grief and annoyance. His very holidays, his periods of relief from his regular duties, were only times of, if possible, more continuous and exhausting toil ; occasions of long and fatiguing journeys, and of almost daily public services. His activity, moreover, was at once wise in its aims and varied in its character. It was on the whole the activity of a sagacious and far-seeing mind, conceiving its aims in a large and generous spirit, and pursuing them with singular constancy and courage ; and, as has already appeared, it was many-sided. Nothing, no form of labour which promised to advance vital godliness among us, came amiss to it. It is pleasing to state in how large a degree it appeared to root in love to the Saviour and genuine interest in

hours; Scotland was so well Province, in the College and places or planning books with ent of their who had pre- f literature, , arranging largement; se exertion d with any on new en- lf—occasi- . Activity ot know it y holidays, were only asting toil; of almost er, was at acter. It s and far- nd gener- constancy as many- mised to miss to it. appeared terest in

His cause. Very far was the zeal of this revered servant of God from being that of the mere Churchman or partizan, bent on the advancement of his own Church or party without any very much better reason than that it is his own. It was only necessary to have a very slight intimacy with his inner life, in order to gain the deep and delightful conviction that a high appreciation of gospel truth and a profound sympathy with what is highest and most valuable in religious life, underlay and ennobled the unceasing activity which marked his entire course. And as a consequence, while he was eager in his attachment to his own branch of the Church of Christ, he rejoiced in indications of spiritual life, wherever they appeared, and he loved, his heart warmed in these later years, as many of us can testify, to good men of every name. But whatever its character and spring, work was his joy; a task to some, a duty to others, it was a necessity to him. And he wrought to the last. The illness which cut him off had assumed a form, that was quite alarming and might have been almost immediately fatal, before it took the pen from his hand. There was great mercy in this for one so constituted: but one Sabbath laid aside from active duty and left free to hold quiet converse with the invisible, and ere another dawned, the door opened and he was called to enter. "Blessed is that servant, whom his Lord, when he cometh, shall find so doing."

Very closely connected with the preceding, and yet entitled to a separate place in even an imperfect analysis of his character, was the breadth of interest by which as a Minister of the word and Professor of Theology in the Canada Presbyterian Church, the deceased

was characterized; the solicitude, which he uniformly evinced for the welfare of the whole Church, and for all that could promote its efficiency and honor. He was never the person to be satisfied with the prosperity, however great, of one congregation, or one corner of the field, especially his own; while other parts of it might be lying waste, given over to neglect and barrenness or something worse. His soul was too large, and his interest in the things of Christ too deep and intelligent, to be contented with so narrow a satisfaction. The whole field, so far as observation or report could make it known to him, was in his eye, and the weakest and neediest parts were just the ones to excite his deepest solicitude, and evoke his heartiest efforts. The Presbyterian Church, since it attained any considerable proportions, has never had a Minister who could with equal truth adopt the language of the Apostle of the Gentiles: "Who is weak and I am not weak? Who is offended and I burn not?" "Now we live, if ye stand fast in the Lord." This rare but most serviceable quality; this breadth of view and interest, was in part the cause and in part the consequence of the extensive evangelistic journeys in which he engaged from the first, and in which he persevered to the last. During their course, it was his happiness to break ground in many a district which has since borne abundant fruit, and in others, to revive what was weak and ready to die; his exuberant energy and resolute will serving in not a few cases to rally the friends of Presbyterian order, in districts where he found them weak and disheartened. The country was ripe for such a labourer when he came to it, and he saw and seized

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the opportunity; preaching far and near, undeterred by distances and severities of weather, which many persons of much younger years would have hesitated to encounter. In this way he contributed, we are safe in saying, more than any other individual, to give to the Presbyterian Church in this Province the wide influence for good which it holds to-day. It will be well for our Church if its gracious Head bestows on it, from time to time, a goodly number of men in whom this excellence of character is re-produced in any similar measure—men, who cannot limit their sympathies and interest to a single congregation, or even district, whose affections embrace the remote as well as the near, and go out only more strongly towards the weak and struggling, “taking pleasure in Zion’s stones, and favouring the dust thereof.”

Not so apparent, perhaps, to those who knew him only in the distance, as his wide and irrepressible activity, but not less real, as forming part of the man and the Christian, was his great benevolence of heart. All knew him to be abundant in labours; not all, though many, knew how strong and tender were his attachments, how unexacting he was in the attentions which he claimed from those around him, how prompt and active his sympathies with suffering friends, and within how wide a circle these were exercised, how open his hand to help a good cause or a needy person, how ready to oblige on every occasion, and—what is more difficult—how ready to forgive and forget a personal wrong, with all his pertinacity in adhering to what he believed to be truth and right; how uniformly kind and cheerful, in these later years at least, his bearing towards young

and old. To this feature of his character, to its benevolence still more than to its strength, to the cheerfulness of age in his case, even more than to its extraordinary energy, is the affection due, with which, throughout this province and far beyond it, his person was regarded. We are safe in saying that for many years he did not enter a house but to make warm friends, if his entrance did not find them already such; and so his name has become a household word in the land, and the tidings of his death will spread through it to awaken a tender regret in thousands of hearts.

This sketch would be quite imperfect, did I not speak of one other quality which characterized the closing years even, of the departed servant of God—the freshness of his emotions, the warmth of his sympathies with all that was transpiring around him, the keen and unabated interest with which he regarded, even to the last, the various movements in the world of literature, and of religious and social life. I do not know that he had outlived the interest with which he regarded any one of the subjects which occupied his thoughts in the vigour of early manhood. Few of the younger ministers of the Church, at any rate, could regard with a brisker interest the advances which were being made or attempted in the various spheres of thought and action. Most men at an age far short of his, live in the past rather than in the present or the future. It is the memories of deceased friends and acquaintances, the recollections of conflicts waged, defeats encountered, or triumphs achieved, long ago, which stir any susceptibility of enthusiasm in their breasts, rather than the movements that are transpiring at the time, or giving in-

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timation of their approach. And if this had been the case with our aged and revered father, who could have wondered at it; looking back, as he did, over sixty years of public life, having borne an important part in many of the movements which this long series of years had witnessed, retaining a singularly accurate and full recollection of many more, preceded to the grave by almost all his contemporaries,—who could have wondered, I repeat,—if in these circumstances his interest had lingered chiefly around the past? But it did not. No one had a keener relish for news of all kinds, or canvassed with greater vivacity what was taking place around. His years were many, but his heart was young. The silver of age was around his head, but the fire of youthful feeling still burned within his breast.

That fire is quenched now, or burns with a more ethereal flame. The ever-active and laborious servant has “accomplished, as an hireling, his day.” “The days of our years are three score years and ten: and if by reason of strength, they be four score years, yet is their strength labour and sorrow, for it is soon cut off and we fly away.” We fly away! That form, in which was exhibited so singular a union of strength and frailty; the eye dim, the intellect clear and active; the limbs supporting with difficulty the still massive frame, the voice ringing out its notes firm and clear; the step slow and uncertain, the memory running rapidly along an experience of well nigh a century, and able to recall minute incidents at any point; the hoary wreath of age around the brow, the face lit up with the playfulness of childhood;—that form, presenting contrasts so striking, has passed away. It was a sight yesterday which men regarded with

wonder not unmixed with a more tender emotion. It is only a memory to-day, a memory, however, which many will cherish with sacred respect for long years.

To you, the members of this congregation, that memory will be especially dear. He was one of yourselves, and never failed to speak of himself as such. At a critical period in your history, when your very existence as a congregation was hanging by a thread, he came to your help with singular generosity, and with no less singular courage. In your prosperity he continued to take a deep interest. In the providence of God you were privileged to hear his last public discourse. The ministry which had opened so many years ago, and under circumstances so different, closed among you, and within these walls. Is it necessary that I should ask you to cherish the memory of this honored and beloved servant of God? While doing so, aim at a congregational life that shall in some measure be conformed to his personal life; that shall possess something of its breadth of interest, healthfulness of tone, generosity of spirit, readiness to labour, and above all, its blessed spring, love to the Saviour and fellowship in His life. This will be the best and most lasting tribute you can raise to one who ministered to you for nearly two years in holy things. "Remember them which had the rule over you, who spake unto you the word of God, whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation." "Wherefore seeing we are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race set before us, looking unto Jesus." Looking unto Jesus! His best servants have

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